

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00354 161021Z

43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 AID-05

EB-07 CU-04 COME-00 TRSE-00 AGR-10 /100 W

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R 160932Z MAR 76

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2958

FAS/USDA WASHDC

USDOC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS BAGHDAD 0354

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, BTRA, IZ

SUBJ: HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS IN BAGHDAD

REF: 1975 BAGHDAD 991

1. THERE ARE FEWER THAN 500 HOTEL ROOMS IN BAGHDAD WHICH ARE
AT LEAST MINIMALLY ACCEPTABLE TO AMERICAN TRAVELERS. SITUATION
WILL IMPROVE ONLY GRADUALLY UNTIL LATE 1977. IN ADDITION
TOURISM INDUSTRY OF IRAQ IS IN ITS INFANCY AND NEITHER HOTELS
NOR TRAVEL AGENCIES (WITH ONE EXCEPTION IDENTIFIED BELOW) CAN
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PAGE 02 BAGHDA 00354 161021Z

BE COUNTED UPON TO MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS. USINT IS BEING

ASKED BY GROWING NUMBER OF BUSINESS VISITORS (PARTICULARLY USDA COOPERATING ASSOCIATIONS) TO MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS. THIS WE ARE NOT RPT NOT MANNED OR FUNDED TO DO.

2. UNTIL JANUARY 1976 HOTELS IN BAGHDAD (WHICH ARE MAINLY IN PRIVATE SECTOR) WERE FREE TO SET THEIR PRICES AS THEY SAW FIT AND PRICES WERE ESCALATING. GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ HAS RECENTLY FORCED HOTELS TO ROLL BACK PRICES AND HAS PLACED CEILINGS ON THEM. IN RETURN, HOWEVER, GOVERNMENT HAS CONCEDED TO HOTELS RIGHT TO DEMAND TEN DINAR (34 DOLLAR) NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT PER PERSON TO SECURE RESERVATION AGAINST NO-SHOW. ALL HOTELS NOW INSIST ON THIS DEPOSIT--WHETHER ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE BY USINT, TRAVEL AGENCY OR BY TRAVELER DIRECTLY.

3. NO SHOW RATE FOR VISITING BUSINESSMEN AND REPS OF USDA COOPERATING AGENCIES IS NOW VER 50 PERCENT AND, IN ANY CASE, USINT HAS NO RPT NOT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR MAKING DEPOSITS. HENCE, WE WILL NOT RPT NOT MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS FOR NON-USG PERSONNEL. IN THE CASE OF USG DIRECT HIRE PERSONNEL, WE WILL ATTEMPT TO MAKE RESERVATIONS BUT WILL NEED 34 DOLLARS PER ROOM IN ADVANCE OR APPROPRIATE GUARANTEE OF REPAYMENT IN EVENT OF NO-SHOW.

4. WE HAVE FREQUENTLY IN PAST RECOMMENDED (REFTEL) USE OF ONLY TRAVEL AGENCY OF INTERNATIONAL STATURE AND CAPABILITY IN IRAQ: THOMAS COOK OVERSEAS LTD., SA'ADOON STREET, P.O. BOX 2007, BANGHDAD (TELEPHONE 89721; TELEGRAM THOMSCOOK BAGHDAD). ITS BRITISH DIRECTOR IS JEFF SMITH. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT ALL PRIVATE AMERICANS WISHING TO VISIT BAGHDAD SET UP THEIR RESERVATIONS THROUGH THOMAS COOK. IF PRIVATE AMERICANS ASK US TO MAKE RESERVATIONS WE SHALL DECLINE TO DO SO BUT WILL TURN THE APPLICATION OVER TO THOMAS COOK'S BAGHDAD OFFICE WITH A CABLE TO THE AMERICAN PARTY INFORMING HIM OF OUR ACTION. AMERICAN TRAVELERS TO BAGHDAD MUST OF COURSE FORWARD 34 DOLLAR PER PERSON DEPOSIT TO THOMAS COOK BAGHDAD OR CAN MAKE DEPOSIT WITH THOMAS COOK OFFICES NEAREST THEM AND ASK THAT OFFICE TO PURSUE THE RESERVATIONS.

5. ACTION REQUEST: STATE, USDOC, FAS/USDA AND INFO ADDRESSEES PLEASE GIVE COPY OF THIS MESSAGE OR ITS GIST TO UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 BAGHDA 00354 161021Z

US BUSINESSMEN AND OTHER PRIVATE AMERICANS YOU KNOW ARE PLANNING TO VISIT BAGHDAD. RECOMMEND USDA/FAS IN PARTICULAR DISTRIBUTE THIS MESSAGE TO ALL RPT ALL USDA COOPERATING GROUPS, STARTING WITH NATIONAL RENDERERS ASSOCIATION OF CHICAGO (SEE STATE 054400).WILEY

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